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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Third and fourth periodic reports of States parties

New Zeland*

Addendum

Status of women in New Zealand 1998: supplementary material

Article 7. Political and public life

Women in decision-making

New Zealand Centre for Women and Leadership

1. In March 1998 Massey University announced the establishment of New Zealand's first Centre for Women and Leadership. The Centre will promote leadership opportunities for women through education, research and community activity. It will provide a forum for debate, coordinate research projects and convene conferences and short courses.

* For the initial report submitted by the Government of New Zealand, see CEDAW/C/5/Add 41/Amend.1 and Corr.1; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.105, CEDAW/C/SR.106 and CEDAW/C/SR.109, and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/43/38), paras. 74-126. For the second periodic report submitted by the Government of New Zealand, see CEDAW/C/NZL/2 and Add.1; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.243, and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/49/38), paras. 608-665.

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2. The Centre will focus on women in management and business, women in self-employment, women as directors, women in the workforce, and women as leaders in central and local government and community organizations. The Centre will develop research opportunities for Maori women in leadership and for Pacific women in leadership.

Article 11. Employment

Occupation

Unified pay system for teachers

3. In early March 1998 NZEI Te Riu Roa, the union that represents early childhood workers and primary teachers, and the Government reached agreement on a unified pay system for primary and secondary teachers. This means there will be significant pay increases for a workforce where over 80 per cent of the people employed are women.

4. Primary teachers on the basic scale will receive, on average, increases of over 10 per cent, and teachers in management positions will receive, on average, increases of approximately 14 per cent.

Article 12. Health

Health risks for women

National Cervical Screening Programme

5. The operational part of the National Cervical Screening Programme will be transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Health Funding Authority in mid-1998. The transfer is administrative and brings together two formerly separate parts of the Programme.

6. The Health Funding Authority is committed to continuing and improving the Programme. As at March 1998, the Programme has enrolled 85 per cent of all eligible women, two years ahead of the original schedule.

Article 16. Marriage and family life

Property rights

Matrimonial property rights

7. In March 1998, the Government introduced two bills dealing with property following the breakdown of marriages and de facto relationships.

8. The Matrimonial Property Amendment Bill updates the Matrimonial Property Act 1976. It extends the basic division rules of the 1976 Act to provide that on the death of one spouse, the surviving spouse would be entitled to the same share of the matrimonial property as would have applied had the marriage broken down.

9. Other measures contained in the Bill include the treatment of heirlooms and *taonga* (treasure), greater powers for the Courts where minor or dependent children are involved and better protection where matrimonial property has been disposed of to a trust or company.

10. The De Facto Relationships (Property) Bill introduces a property regime to apply on the breakdown of a de facto relationship. There is currently no specific statute law for dividing property when a de facto relationship ends. The proposed property regime includes

a presumption of equal sharing of the family home and chattels. The division of other relationship property will reflect both financial and non-financial contributions – unlike the Matrimonial Property Act where there is a presumption of equal sharing.

Family violence

Maori Women's Development Unit, National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges

11. The Maori Women's Development Unit of the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges was established in March 1998. The Unit will specifically target violence in Maori families by providing policy advice, monitoring and assessment of services for women and children, as well as developing new services.

12. Approximately half the women assisted by Women's Refuge in 1997 were Maori.

Information and publicity

13. In the reporting period, information and publicity about the Convention included the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's regular programme of consultations with non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights issues. These have included discussion on the proposed optional protocol. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade also publishes the *Human Rights Bulletin*.

14. The Human Rights Commission developed a programme of seminars for lawyers on international human rights instruments, including the Convention, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, published a handbook on international human rights instruments and provided information about the Convention on their website (www.hrc.co.nz).

15. Staff from both the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Human Rights Commission addressed the 1997 annual conference of the National Council of Women on the Convention and the optional protocol. UNIFEM New Zealand hosted a seminar on the Convention at which Dame Silvia Cartwright spoke.

16. Constitutional lawyer Mai Chen presented a paper entitled "Improving Enforcement of the Women's Rights Convention" to the Conference on Human Rights – How they are Best Protected, in 1996.

17. Dame Silvia Cartwright's nomination and subsequent election to a second term on the Committee in 1996 attracted some publicity. Dame Silvia also presented a paper to the Asia/Pacific Regional Judicial Colloquium, Hong Kong, May 1996, on "The Relevance of International Standards to Domestic Litigation: the Case of New Zealand". This paper was published in the Conference proceedings.

18. In 1996 Dr Marilyn Waring of the University of Waikato published *Three Masquerades: Essays on Equality, Work and Hu(man) Rights*, which included discussion of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and reproduced the Convention as an appendix.